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**Potential Objective 1: Increase the vitality and economic success of the City Waterfront and King Street Corridor.**

*Themes:* this is a unique asset that distinguishes Alexandria from competitors; it is an underperforming asset; immediate actions could yield results within the strategic plan's 3 year timeframe.

*Supporting conditions:* several different studies showing visitors and local shoppers spending less than average at King Street and Waterfront businesses. Hotel occupancy is doing well compared to other areas but is still declining. A \$100 per visitor increase in spending provides \$16 million for the City in tax revenue.

*Plans and studies:* King Street Retail Strategy, Waterfront Plan\*, Torpedo Factory Strategic Plan\*, Parking Plan\*, AEDP's Tourism Infrastructure Study\*, ACVA branding analysis.

**Potential initiatives:**

1. Complete and implement a wayfinding program to improve the visitor experience, to direct visitor traffic to their destinations (including attractions, shops, restaurants, and parking), and to alert visitors to additional attractions, shops, restaurants, and neighborhoods.
2. Achieve a balance of customer and employee parking demand and supply (consistent with the City's transportation objectives) to improve the customer experience, increase sales, support businesses with employee parking options that do not conflict with customers, maximize the use of existing spaces, and generate revenue. Categories include: number, location, pricing and modernizing of meters; garage pricing and availability, employee parking programs, valet parking, access to currently-private garages, etc.
3. Implement recommendations of the plans and studies above.
4. Increase operating hours and frequency of King Street Trolley to achieve higher use by visitors and employees.
5. Optimize appeal and success of existing attractions, such as the Torpedo Factory.
6. Increase the appeal of King Street to shoppers and diners by restoring the lights in trees.
7. Foster coordination among retailers on initiatives to increase appeal and sales, such as supporting later hours with parking, marketing, or other initiatives. If retailers and/or building owners form an association, identify ways the City should support it.
8. Implement a pilot food cart program on Market Square in summer of 2010.
9. Ensure that new development is compatible with existing neighborhoods, natural environment, and historic character. Preserve historic structures.
10. Consider adding a carousel and other appropriately scaled attractions to the Waterfront.

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11. Pursue actions that encourage more overnight stays by visitors to the City.  
Improve marina operations to attract and service transient boaters.
12. Identify demand generators that support hotel occupancy.

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**Potential Objective 2: Increase office and retail occupancy rates through business attraction, retention, and expansion.**

*Themes:* Vacant space is a ready asset for increased economic growth; it has a close relationship to City fiscal health; the City is attractive to federal tenants that need a lot of space; some of these federal agencies have contractor “tails” on which we can capitalize; filling retail space can also help nearby existing retailers. Small businesses are a good fit for Alexandria, in part because of the type of buildings that we have; there are existing programs intended to improve and expand small businesses that are not fully used; the availability of new empty office space around the region may mean businesses are tempted to move elsewhere.

*Supporting conditions:* The City’s office vacancy rate is 12% and its retail vacancy rate is 3% %.(Source: Costar, 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2009). The federal government is looking for space to lease in excess of 10 million square feet. Businesses smaller than 20 employees account for 91% of the City’s employers (Source: Alexandria Small Business Development Center).

*Plans and studies:* AEDP’s SWOT analysis.

Potential initiatives:

- Attract appropriate federal tenants to leased (not owned) office space.
- Attract federal contractors; further capitalize on US Patent and Trademark Office and status as “intellectual property capital” of the nation.
- Attract mid-size office users to vacant space in Carlyle.
- Determine and implement initiatives to strengthen, retain, and expand Alexandria’s association and non-profit cluster.
- Increase the ability of Alexandria businesses to compete online.
- Identify successful small businesses in key sectors and, with their help, identify actions which would strengthen their ability to expand.
- Support the growing “commercial creative” cluster.
- Create a list of top 100 companies (size, growth potential, visibility) that Alexandria cannot afford to lose.
- Attract retail brands that complement and support the existing base of independent retailers.
- Work with owners of vacant and underperforming office and retail space to determine if renovation, remodeling, or relatively minor exterior changes would improve the building’s competitive position and whether the City can facilitate that investment, through regulatory or other means. Match building or business owners with contractors that have experienced a loss of business in this downturn.

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**Potential Objective 3: Focused, responsive small area planning that seizes desirable development opportunities and prepares Alexandria for the post-recession period.**

*Themes:* In the next few years, the City may attract desirable development proposals that require a small area plan amendment or rezoning; the City wants to make sure that development proposals are properly and comprehensively evaluated, but this may not require a 12-18 month small area plan; it is important that the City know that these development proposals are viable before committing resources and raising public expectations; responsive planning can help ensure the City achieves quality new development that adds amenities and improves quality of life as well as increasing the tax base.

*Supporting conditions:* There are a number of attractive development sites in the City which may require a small area plan amendment or a zoning change to accommodate desired development. The City does not always know far in advance which sites will attract development interest. Asking development to wait until the small area plan can be added to the work program and then completed does not contribute to near term economic growth. The City has accelerated planning efforts at the request of development proposals that did not move to construction once the plan was completed.

*Plans and studies:* Small area plans now under way.

Potential initiatives:

- Allocate a portion of FY2011 staff resources for small area plan amendments.
- Develop a small area plan amendment process that balances the need for careful evaluation of development proposals in light of the City's planning principles and objectives and the interest of moving viable projects forward. Identify and target priority features and amenities that private development should provide to the City and to adjacent neighborhoods.
- Develop a mechanism to ensure projects have some financial viability before committing public resources to planning, before involving the public in a planning process and raising their expectations.
- Create commercial opportunities in the Waterfront, Potomac Yard, and Beauregard planning processes.
- Continue facilitation of Landmark Mall redevelopment.
- Identify and support redevelopment opportunities along Mt. Vernon Avenue and in the Arlandria area.
- With the successful leasing of the Victory Center, begin appropriate planning efforts for the nearby area.

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**Potential Objective 4: Use the Beauregard Corridor planning and post-planning process to strengthen the City's competitive edge in the West End.**

*Themes:* The BRAC 133/ Washington Headquarters Service (WHS) project under construction at the Mark Center may present an immediate and new opportunity to foster economic development in the West End; one of Alexandria's distinctive characteristics is traditional urban form, which is highly desired and is one of its economic attractors, but which is not present in the Beauregard Corridor; high capacity transit investments in the corridor would also spur to economic development.

*Supporting conditions:* The BRAC 133 (WHS) project will add 6,400 employees; there are a few large landowners in the area so consolidation is not a barrier to redevelopment; landowners are interested in redevelopment, albeit not in the short term.

*Plans and studies:* Beauregard Corridor small area plan, Transit Corridor Feasibility Study, numerous transportation studies related to BRAC and the HOT lanes projects.

Potential initiatives:

- Complete a Beauregard Corridor plan that supports the City's strategic objectives, delivers a balance of development, infrastructure and amenities; and emphasizes a distinctly Alexandrian urban form.
- Aggressively pursue transit in this corridor.
- Market office space and office projects to employers interested in proximity to commands relocating to the BRAC 133 facility WHS and other Mark Center employers.

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**Potential Objective 5: Enrich the Arlandria area of the City as an economic asset and as a place to live, work and play by delivering on the objectives of adopted plans.**

*Themes:* Arlandria is one of the areas of the City that did not fully participate in the recent real estate boom, the City may need to take steps to facilitate planned redevelopment for it to occur. There are a number of planned infrastructure and quality-of-life improvements that have yet to be made.

*Supporting conditions:* Development proposals have been “moving up” Mt. Vernon Avenue over the past year, with recent proposals for the Mount Vernon Village shopping center and Presidential Greens; an advisory group is being named this year that will include residents motivated to encourage redevelopment; there is an enterprise zone in the area that has not been used. Design guidelines for Four Mile Run have been approved, with a park planned at Four Mile Run; current implementation efforts include reuse of the Duron building and a competition for an Eads St-Commonwealth Ave pedestrian bridge.

*Plans and studies:* Arlandria Neighborhood Plan, Four Mile Design Guidelines, Safeway/Datatel Site Feasibility Analysis, 2001 Upper Potomac West (UPW) Task Force Report, Arts Districts study.

Potential initiatives:

- Explore and address disincentives for economic development and opportunities to overcome those, including factors affecting redevelopment of key parcels, which may require changes to the current set of development constraints (zoning, height limits, land use, other requirements).
- Prioritize and complete public improvements that were identified and recommended in the Arlandria Plan, including possible leveraging of city-owned property to incentivize appropriate new development (excluding those properties intended for parks or open space).
- Identify specific criteria for types and locations of retail businesses to be recruited and possibly supported with loans or other incentives.
- Accelerate the Four Mile Run Park.
- Initiate neighborhood-led projects such as street tree planting, façade improvements, and banners, with staff support.
- Pursue actions necessary to extend the life of the enterprise zone; explore expanding the zone; recruit businesses to take advantage of the zone. Explore and potentially establish an Arts District and other public arts-related issues.